



133 Old Road to Nine Acre Corner
Concord, MA 01742

July 22, 2014

The Honorable Janet L. Sanders
c/o Antitrust Division
Office of Attorney General
One Ashburton Place, 18th Floor
Boston, MA 02108

Dear Judge Sanders:

We are writing to express Emerson Hospital's strong support for Partners HealthCare System regarding the proposed consent judgment. Let us share with you what Emerson Hospital's long standing clinical affiliation with Partners has meant to our patients and what the even more integrated relationship contemplated by the Consent Judgment would mean for communities in Eastern Massachusetts.

Over the past 17 years, Emerson Hospital, Mass General and Brigham and Women's Hospitals have established strong clinical collaboration that bring world-class care in certain specialties to the twenty-five communities we serve. For patients battling a cancer diagnosis, this collaboration means access to leading-edge clinical trials, daily radiation treatments and multidisciplinary clinics, all available in their own backyard, close to friends and family. Recovery is easier, support is immediately at hand, travel is minimized and patients receive the best possible care in a lower cost setting.

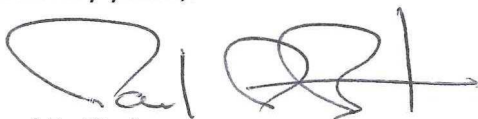
This collaboration in cancer care has been replicated in recent years for Emerson patients needing more advanced care in certain other specialties – high risk maternity care, neonatology, bariatric surgery, pediatric sub-specialty care, cardiology, thoracic surgery and gynecologic oncology. Simply stated, patients would not have access to these specialties in a lower cost community setting without strong clinical collaborations with an academic medical center. As you can see, both Mass General and Brigham & Women's Hospital support the delivery of health care services in lower cost community settings. They have worked diligently

with us to bring these services to the Emerson Hospital service area. Our patients are thrilled to have high quality health care, close to home.

Emerson primary care and specialty physicians have been members of Partners Community HealthCare (PCHI) since 1995. This relationship has helped us to begin implementing systems of care coordination and the electronic health records to support these care delivery systems. By aligning our providers and services through common performance standards, Partners has helped us to create a higher quality and more efficient system of care for our patients. Together, with Partners, we are participating in alternative payment models such as Partners Accountable Care Organization, and the Alternative Quality Contract arrangements with some early success in beginning to coordinate care for our patients. These models are all focused on the delivery of high value services to our patients in a lower cost setting with the long term goal of reducing our total medical expense. All of these projects would have been difficult for us to achieve as a medium size community hospital without the guidance and support of Partners leaders and clinicians. Emerson Hospital, our physicians and their patients, have benefited greatly from our relationship with PCHI by demonstrably improving quality of care while simultaneously lowering costs and reducing readmissions. That said, we fully understand that such clinical affiliations are only the first tentative steps toward the cost efficiencies that can be achieved through a merger and a fully integrated and aligned population health management strategy that requires the significant investments and more integrated relationships that would be permitted by the Consent Judgment.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has established a detailed and open process to review the Partners Health System case. These proposed transactions have been thoroughly reviewed by state agencies and by the Attorney General. Partners and the Attorney General have negotiated an agreement that will serve to contain health care costs and to provide quality, coordinated care across Eastern Massachusetts for many years. We understand that the proposed agreement is designed to support these efforts for providing coordinated patient care in lower cost settings and improving access to behavioral health services. We support that result and believe it is in the best interest of the public and the patients in the Commonwealth.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Paul D. Birch', with a stylized, looped flourish at the end.

Paul D. Birch
Chairman of the Board
Emerson Hospital

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Christine C. Schuster', with a cursive, flowing style.

Christine C. Schuster, RN, MBA
President & CEO
Emerson Hospital